

BALLET SEMINAR

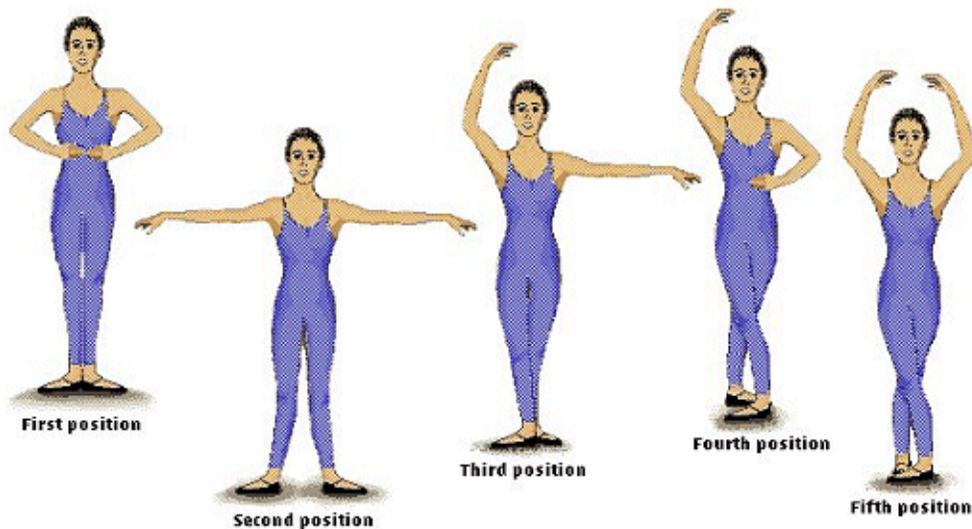
Presented by Stephanie Materazzi

Learning Objectives: (1) Develop an understanding of the basic concept of ballet. (2) Understand why these concepts improve flexibility and movement. (3) Perform training activities with respects to their contribution to flexibility and stability.

History

Ballet originated in the 15th century as part of the Italian renaissance. It was further developed as a concert dance by France and Russia. It is highly technical with its own vocabulary.

Positions of the Body



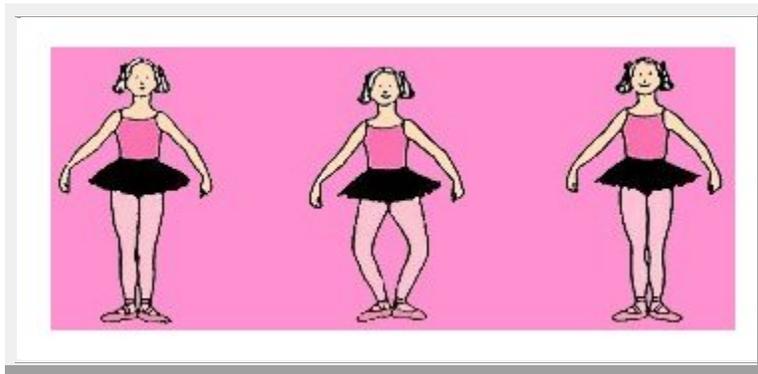
First Position ~ The balls of the feet are turned out entirely. The heels touch each other and the feet face outward, trying to form a straight line.

Second Position ~ Similar to first position, but the feet are spread apart to give a space of about 12 in. between the heels.

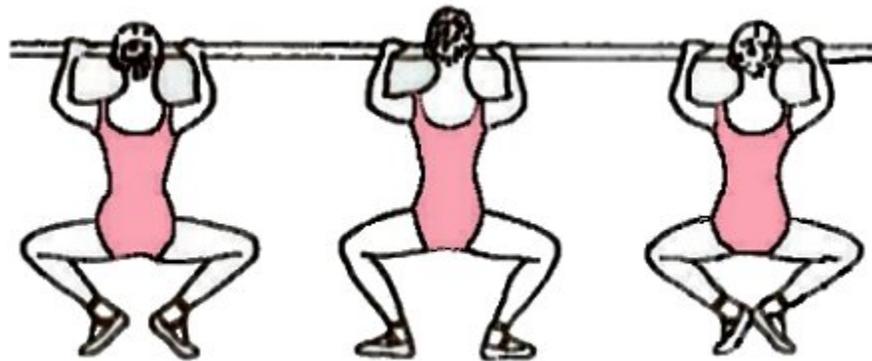
Third Position ~ The heel of one foot is against the instep of the other, with the feet turned outwards.

Fourth Position ~ The feet are placed similarly as third position, but one foot is advanced about 30 cm in front of the other, and both are turned outwards.

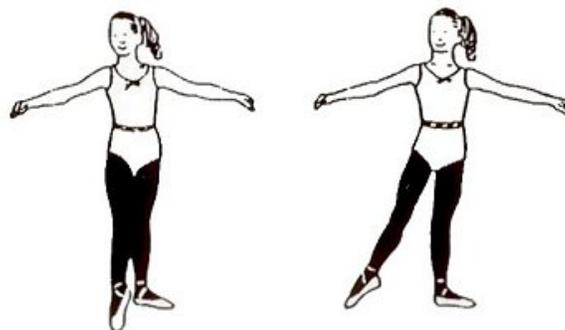
Fifth Position ~ With both feet touching, the toes of each foot reach the heel of the other.



Demi-Plie (duh-MEE-plee-AY) ~Is a half bend at the knees and should be done to two counts. It is the basis of everything you do in ballet. It is important to hold your back straight and your shoulders straight and front. It is a good idea to face the bare when doing plies as this will aide in posturing. It should be practiced in each of the five positions.



Grand Plie (Grahnd-plee-AY)~ Is a full bend at the knees done to four counts going down, and four counts coming up. The heels lift at the full bend (except in the second position where they remain on the floor) and then pushed down to the floor as you pass through a demi-plie coming to the standing position. The Grand Plie should be practiced in all five basic positions, with correct posturing.



Battements Tendus (bat-MAHN tahn-DEW)~ This exercise strengthens the feet and the legs, and develops the arched instep of your feet. It is practiced with your weight centered over the ball of your supporting foot. The leg and foot slide out from position in front (a la quatrieme) to the side (a la seconde)

and to the back (a la quatrieme derriere). The maneuver should be as though the foot is sliding in a direct line and as though through "peanut butter."

Battements Dégage (bat-MAHN day-ga-ZHAY)~ It is executed the same as battement tendu, but as you point your foot, you raise it approximately three inches off the floor, and pointing strongly. Battements dégage strengthen the toe, develop the instep and improve the flexibility of the ankle joint.

Flexibility & Movement

Flexibility is the range of motion possible around a specific joint or series of articulations. Flexibility is specific to a given joint or movement. A person may not be able to function normally if a joint lacks normal movement. The ability to move a joint through an adequate range of movement is important for daily activities in general as well as sports performance. For example, a sprinter may be handicapped by tight, inelastic hamstring muscles since the ability to flex the hip joint will be limited, thus shortening stride length. Activities such as ballet improved flexibility or even the ability to hyperextend some joints for superior performance.